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**A NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY
OF COOPERATIVE ENGAGEMENT
for
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

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Core Course 4
Seminar E
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A NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY OF COOPERATIVE ENGAGEMENT for SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Extending from the urban centers of South Africa to the lesser-developed regions of the arid Sahel, Sub-Saharan Africa spans the post-Cold War spectrum of political, economic, and military challenges for the United States. Generally viewed as lagging in the effort to develop stable governments and self-sustaining economies, Sub-Saharan Africa is, with the exception of a few bright spots, caught in a vicious cycle of conflict, deteriorating infrastructures and humanitarian disasters. Despite this apparent gloomy prognosis, Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the richest regions in the world in human and natural resources. States that have evolved democratic institutions and established policies that encourage foreign investment are making considerable progress, as shown by their increasing life expectancies, greater per-capita incomes and decreasing infant mortality rates. Consistent with its role as a global leader and advocate of stability, economic growth and democratic institutions, the United States will remain engaged to support Sub-Saharan Africa as it adjusts to the post-colonial, post-Cold War era.

U.S. Regional Security Interests

While the United States does not have vital interests in Sub-Saharan Africa, a variety of lesser interests support continued U.S. economic, political, and military engagement in the region.

Economic

Remaining engaged and encouraging the economic growth of Sub-Saharan Africa is in the U.S. interest. Although trade with Africa constitutes only about two percent of U.S. imports and one percent of U.S. exports, Africa's 600 million people represent a significant market for U.S. goods and services. In 1994, the U.S. exported about \$4.4 billion in goods and services to Africa, providing work for more than 80,000 Americans. The United States also has an interest in maintaining access to strategic resources produced in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially oil and strategic minerals. Nigeria, Angola, the Congo, Gabon

and Cameroon are among the leading states that export oil to the United States. Countries in southern Africa meet about half of the annual U.S. demand for platinum, cobalt, and chromium, an essential material for producing high-performance jet engine cores.

Regional stability

The United States retains an interest in regional stability even though it does not maintain a significant military presence in Sub-Saharan Africa. Continuing ethnic conflicts, power struggles between political factions and general anarchy endanger regional stability and may trigger a future multilateral military response. Many of our NATO allies retain significant interests in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the degree of military assistance the U.S. offers during crises may impact relations with them. A decreasing quality of life and inadequate government-provided services may result in a rise of militant anti-Western groups, including radical Islamic factions. Arms proliferation, including the potential spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) also threaten stability.

Humanitarian disasters

The United States has strong historical and cultural ties with Sub-Saharan Africa. Humanitarian disasters, natural and man-made, have taken a tremendous toll on regional stability and economic development. It is in the U.S. interest to continue to support efforts that relieve human suffering and address the sources of the disasters, if possible.

Political/diplomatic

The transition to democratic societies and free market economies as an avenue towards greater regional stability and increased foreign investment remains a key U.S. interest. Sub-Saharan Africa's 49 votes in the U.N. General Assembly can also have a significant impact on future resolutions and initiatives.

Other interests

Environmental degradation, natural and man-made disasters, the rising incidence of AIDS and other diseases, and the ripple effect of rapid population growth remain U S interests Africa is not immune to the spread of inter-continental crime networks, social unrest and unstable economies provide a ripe culture for criminal exploitation Finally, the Straits of Bab el-Mandeb off the Horn of Africa and the Cape of Good Hope remain important strategic sea lines of communication for U S forces deploying to other regions

Regional Overview

Political trends and instability

The majority of African nations are still struggling to shed post-colonial and post-Cold War baggage in order to achieve a degree of social, economic and political stability in the face of a staggering range of challenges Existing regimes are experiencing difficulty in dealing with civil strife arising from a variety of social, economic, and ethnic difficulties, often failing to implement political reforms upon which international aid programs are conditioned Democracy is beginning to take root in some regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, since 1984, the number of democratic states has risen from four to twenty Despite this progress, authoritarian leaders, statism, and the lack of desire of some governments to respond to the needs of its citizens continue to discourage foreign investment in the region

Economic development

With notable exceptions, Sub-Saharan Africa suffers from economic stagnation resulting from the weight of a foreign debt that exceeds \$180 billion, a chronic shortage of domestic and international capital and technical expertise, as well as large trade deficits Exacerbating these problems are deteriorating infrastructures, endemic corruption and inefficiency within leadership circles, and the widespread practice of servicing existing debt with foreign aid While per-capita income has increased in most states, the rate of increase has not kept pace with the rest of the world

Social challenges

Humanitarian crises are increasing in scope and frequency as limited arable land, fuel and potable water combined with the world's fastest population growth, rampant disease (including AIDS) and natural disasters to cause a "ripple effect" to which few Sub-Saharan African governments are able to respond. The need to expend scarce resources to meet economic, security, and humanitarian challenges hinders the development of social institutions that build national unity.

Threats, Challenges, and Opportunities In Sub-Saharan Africa

While regional issues currently do not directly threaten U.S. security, there are a number of challenges to our national interests.

Economic development and growth

For the most part, Sub-Saharan Africa is struggling to reorient economies away from its colonial era dependency on cash crops and natural resource extraction. Economic decline is adding to Sub-Saharan Africa's growing ethnic and social tensions. For many states, foreign assistance is essential to addressing their economic challenges. Unfortunately, aid levels continue to decrease as donor states lose interest or focus on their own internal needs. Regional economic groups are continuing their efforts to expand the circle of economic success to other states, but their resources are limited. Foreign private investment is essential for meeting Sub-Saharan Africa's economic needs. However, current levels of investment are inadequate and high inflation, confiscatory economic policies, and continuing political instability dampen prospects for future investment. Greater stability and free market initiatives will help many states realize the benefits of their human and natural resources.

Regional conflicts and instability

Inter- and intra-state conflicts stemming from economic decline, ethnic tensions, tribalism, and power struggles between political factions continue to plague Africa. The six major wars in Sub-Saharan Africa since 1980 (Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Angola, Uganda, and Somalia) have all been internal struggles.

between multiple power centers, complicating conflict resolution efforts. Internal violence has destroyed vital infrastructures, generated massive refugee flows, disrupted critical agriculture capabilities and forced states to incur massive deficits. Since 1980, conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa have killed between two and four million persons and created over five million refugees. The ongoing struggle between political factions in Somalia has left the state without a coherent central government capable of addressing the needs of its citizens. While the arms infusion which characterized the Cold War has abated, standing armies, often poorly trained and with weak linkages to civil authority, continue to create instability and drain national resources. Future inflows of high-tech weaponry and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction will increase regional instability and the potential for conflict.

Sub-Saharan Africa's thousands of ethnic groups and languages tend to be a centrifugal force governments must overcome. Colonial borders established without regard to ethnicity continues to hamstring efforts to develop cohesive democratic governments. Refugee flows are increasing in the face of economic stress, violence and the search to secure basic human needs. Expectations regarding health care, education and jobs remain very low, contributing to unrest and encouraging the growth of radical groups that promise a better way of life, including fundamentalist Islamic factions.

Humanitarian disasters

Both the magnitude and trans-national impact of humanitarian disasters caused by chronic drought, famine, unchecked disease, poor economic policies, warfare and resulting refugee flows are increasing pressure on foreign governments, international agencies and non-government institutions to provide humanitarian relief. Funds intended for developmental purposes are being diverted to address these crises, further stressing diminishing resources. Furthermore, aid programs are suffering from a lack of government oversight and protection. The vacuum created by governments that fail to represent and address the needs of all of their people is encouraging the rise of anti-democratic groups and internal conflicts, further complicating relief efforts.

Global threats

Threats that potentially have a global impact include massive deforestation, desertification, pollution, organized crime, terrorism, and disease. Deforestation and desertification are limiting the future potential of many regions for economic development, especially in the northern Sahel. The spread of organized crime, corruption and terrorism is further eroding confidence in government institutions that are unable to cope. The AIDS pandemic continues to place massive demands on health and social services throughout the region and appears to be on the verge of causing significant losses among the social, political and military elites. A 30-40 percent infection rate and resultant rising mortality of the middle and upper classes would affect stability and seriously erode the base upon which many economic initiatives are grounded.

U.S. Regional Security Objectives: Linking Ends, Ways and Means

During the Cold War, U.S. policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa was based on confronting and containing Soviet efforts to gain regional influence and basing rights. Since the end of the Cold War, U.S. policy towards the majority of Africa could be characterized as episodic reactions to regional crises. As the 21st century approaches, the United States cannot ignore the 600 million people of Africa who are searching to develop stable governments and self-sustaining economies. Within the restrictions imposed by limited means, U.S. policy will be proactive instead of episodic, helping to build a foundation for stability and economic growth.¹ Encouraging economic development, supporting conflict avoidance and resolution, encouraging the growth of democratic institutions, and providing support for humanitarian interventions constitute the four pillars of the U.S. security strategy of cooperative engagement for Sub-Saharan Africa.

Encouraging economic development

Efforts to reverse cycles of environmental degradation, resource depletion, population growth and migration are key to achieving regional stability. U.S. foreign aid and assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa will supplement the many resources offered by global organizations and non-government institutions. The

¹ Total U.S. foreign aid for Sub-Saharan Africa in 1993 was \$1.7 billion, including military assistance and foreign military sales. Twenty-eight countries received \$30 million or less, while eighteen received \$15 million or less.

resources provided by the U S Agency for International Development, the U S Information Agency, United Nations, World Bank, and other multilateral institutions such as the European Union are limited and cannot resolve Sub-Saharan Africa's economic problems. However, they can make the critical difference between success and failure of promising economic initiatives. Aid programs must be better orchestrated to ensure more is targeted to providing local level assistance and less for administrative overhead. "Self-help" initiatives and foreign private investment are the key to building self-sustaining economies. While Sub-Saharan Africa's rich natural and human resources offer a strong incentive for investing in the region, political instability and the failure to address inflationary monetary policies, government corruption, ethnic conflict, organized crime, and deteriorating infrastructures remain barriers to economic development. The global trend towards market economies and privatization provide an incentive for African nations to adopt similar policies. Where practicable, the U S will focus its aid and assistance on areas that are the most likely to have a "spillover" impact upon neighboring states. Furthermore, developing human resources can have a greater long-term economic impact than will improving the means of extracting current resources in order to improve the current balance of payments or service debt. The U S recognizes that movement toward democratic governments and free market economies will be a long-term effort. For faltering, debt-ridden economies, recovery will usually involve a degree of austerity that is difficult to sustain without a long-term national commitment to sound fiscal policies.

Supporting conflict avoidance and resolution

The U S will continue to support the growth of regional alliances such as the Organization of African Unity that are dedicated to avoiding and resolving conflicts, as well as addressing a multitude of other regional issues. The U S contribution to resolving conflicts will focus on diplomacy, mediation, regional confidence-building measures and providing support for multilateral peacekeeping efforts. Economic sanctions, cessation of aid, and suspending debt renegotiation will remain viable means for encouraging warring factions to cease hostilities and engage in negotiations to resolve their differences. Except for

extreme circumstances, unilateral U S interventions to resolve regional conflicts will remain the exception, and not the rule. When U S interests indicate military support for multilateral peacekeeping operations is warranted, force deployments will be for a limited duration, have clear objectives and specific rules of engagement. As stability grows, the U S will encourage military demobilization in order to diminish the potential for future conflicts and free vital resources for more productive pursuits.

Growth of democratic institutions

The waning of divisive pressures and economic growth are often the result of developing government institutions that recognize and encourage cultural differences, languages, and religions. Stability is also enhanced by militaries that are responsible to civil institutions. U S foreign aid programs will be linked to realistic appraisals of progress towards developing institutions and policies that will encourage internal economic growth and foreign investment. U S State Department, USAID and USIA programs, military-to-military contacts, IMET, and cultural exchanges are all means to help governments join the global trend towards providing increased opportunities for all citizens.

Humanitarian interventions

There will occasionally occur humanitarian disasters of such a scope that direct U S intervention can save lives and help governments recover the ability to develop and sustain programs to meet the needs of its citizens. Unique U S capabilities, including strategic airlift and sealift, will continue to be of great value to relieve human suffering during droughts and famines. U S participation in multi-national efforts will be tailored to give local governments the means to address the source of the crisis, if possible. U S efforts to address future humanitarian disasters will also be proactive. Intelligence resources can provide information concerning weather trends, potential crop failures, and other factors that may lead to humanitarian disasters. Early use of this information may help prevent or lessen the impact of future disasters.

Towards the 21st Century

The end of colonialism and the Cold War superpower competition has given Africa a window of opportunity to end the debilitating cycle of tribalism, ethnic conflict, incipient nationalism, and economic malaise. While the U S will continue to support efforts to address the many challenges facing Sub-Saharan Africa, the lack of vital interests and dwindling resources for foreign assistance limit its ability to do so unilaterally. *Foreign investment and not foreign assistance* is the key to regional development, and stability is the key to attracting foreign investors. Ultimately, external actors do not have the capability or the right to impose lasting solutions to Africa's many challenges. The future effort to resolve conflicts, develop healthy economies and evolve representative governments must be led by the people of Sub-Saharan Africa.